the depth and elevation of the fourth bed could not be ascertained: and the fifth bed which is at an elevation of nine hundred feet above the river, is fifteen feet thick. This important deposite is on the Virginia side of the Potomac, and forms the north slope of what is termed the New-creek Ridge. The precipitous nature of the mountain slope allows the discharge of the coal, by means of a slide, from each successive stratum into the very bed of the river below.

A very satisfactory account of the coal mines in the immediate vicinity of Frostburg is furnished in the collection of Reports and Letters of the Engineers of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, from which the extract above, referring to the extent of this deposite, was also taken.

"In the hills and valley, three distinct veins of rich bituminous coal is frequently opened. The first or lowest is near the base of the hills and is from two and a half to three and a half feet thick. This was the first vein discovered, and was opened about twenty years ago by Mr. Rizor and the coal held in high estimation for many years until the richer veins were discovered. The second vein is from eighty to one nundred feet higher in the hills; and is from four to six feet thick. The third and most valuable vein is found nearer the summit of the hills and the upper parts of deep vallies. This vein is from eight to ten feet thick and like the veins below, is between strata of rock. The bed on which the coal rests, and the roof which covers it, are of slate with a great mixture of coal: but the coal diminishes and the slate prevails for three or four feet in thickness. This often gives the mine an appearance of uncommon depth until it is thorougly opened. But in those mines which are worked to any great extent, the vein of pure coal is about eight feet thick, subdivided horizontally by three or four very thin veins of slate, seldom more than half an inch thick. Next above the slate roof is sandstone in thick layers and often of a quality suitable for the various purposes of freestone in building. There is a preference given to those mines which lie deep, and are in a moist situation, and have a considerable height of hill over them: the coal from such mines, being more pure and solid, is quarried in much larger blocks and is much less liable to crumble and waste in handling, than that from mines situated so near the top of the hills as to be too dry and to have but little depth of earth over them." (Reports and Letters, &c. p. 93–94..)

The analysis of a specimen of the coal from the large